

Indiana Land Resources Council Meeting Minutes

Date: March 13, 2001

Location: Office of the Commissioner of Agriculture

Members Present:

John Fernandez
Bob Guernsey
Mary McConnell
Riely O'Connor
Sam Smith
Don Strietelmeier

Members Absent:

Lt. Governor Joe Kernan
Joe Pearson
David Hess
Eric Kelly

OCA Staff:

Joe Tutterrow
Julia Wickard

Director Joe Tutterrow called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. Mary McConnell moved and Sam Smith seconded the motion to approve the December 12, 2000 minutes. The motion passed unanimously. Bob Guernsey moved and Don Strietelmeier seconded the motion to approve the January 23, 2001 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Report:

Joe Tutterrow distributed an Executive Director's activity worksheet for the Council's review. The attached worksheet shows meetings attended, presentations given, significant public assists provided, training activities attended, and future commitments for the Executive Director.

Presentations:

Paul Kohlhoff, Chairman of the Indiana Land Protection Alliance presented information about Land Trusts in Indiana. Kohlhoff explained the purpose, funding, operation and advantages of Land Trusts. There are currently nine major Land Trusts in Indiana, in addition to The Nature Conservancy (TNC).

Other key information included:

- Each land trust can have a different focus.
- TNC's primary mission is to protect biodiversity.
- An estimated 5,000 acres are currently in land trusts in Indiana, excluding the TNC.
- Since the early 1970s, the TNC has helped protect 40,000 acres in Indiana.
- Approximately 4% of Indiana's total land base is currently set aside for conservation and recreational purposes.
- The new "Forest Bank" program is being introduced in the Blue River Watershed, which can provide income to landowners in exchange for timber rights on their property.

Eric Myers, Executive Director for the Natural Resources Foundation, presented information about the Foundation and the Indiana Heritage Trust Program. The

Foundation was formed in 1990 and the Heritage Trust Program began in 1992. The focus for the program is land acquisition for the Department of Natural Resources landholding Divisions. From 1993 through 2000:

- The Heritage Trust License Plate program generated \$14,216,750.
- \$15 million in state funding was provided through the legislature.
- \$17.2 million was provided from the private sector.
- An additional \$7.3 million in federal dollars was leveraged.
- A total of \$25.7 million has been generated for land protection through The Heritage Trust Program in 118 projects.

Upon completion of Myer's presentation, there was further discussion on the value of the Indiana Heritage Trust Program (IHT). The IHT appropriation is at risk because of current economic conditions. There is concern it may not be funded this biennium. Mary McConnell distributed a document entitled "Indiana Heritage Trust Coalition Fact Sheet". Mary strongly encouraged the Council to take a position on this issue. John Fernandez stated that with so many funding issues, it would be difficult to prioritize. All members agreed that the program has been valuable. Individual support is encouraged, but the Council made no recommendations.

Work Plan:

Joe Tutterrow distributed preliminary information that will be used by the Council to develop the ILRC Work Plan. Priorities were discussed and additional ideas added. Joe Tutterrow will take this information and develop the plan, adding targets and specific information.

Pilot Project:

Phil Anderson, Executive Vice-President of the Indiana Beef Cattle Association, and member of the Indiana Land Use Consortium, presented an overview of a new initiative that will focus on Elkhart County. A resource team has been formed that will work with Elkhart County's leadership to develop a model for use in other parts of the state. Two additional models will be developed over time. Joe Tutterrow will coordinate the process. The first meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 21st in Indianapolis.

Principles and Beliefs:

The Council finalized the "guiding principles" document. These will be posted on the ILRC Web site.

White Papers:

The Council feels that much of the information is already available. The information needs to be coordinated and consolidated. The Council recommended:

- The highest priority should be “Economic Indicators”.
- We need to identify what are the most important indicators.
- Identify the different land uses in Indiana and what is the economic impact of conversion.
- Key “Environmental Indicators” should also be identified.

Library:

The Council provided direction for the development of the library. It will be a combination of electronic information and reference material. Joe Tutterrow will purchase recommended resources with current year funds. The library should have copies of comprehensive plans from around the state. Joe Tutterrow will work with Purdue, Ball State, the Association of Cities and Towns and the Association of Indiana Counties to gather this information.

Other Update:

- Julia Wickard provided a legislative update.
- Joe Tutterrow provided an update on the ILRC Web Site
- The grant application for the POLIS Center at IUPUI for the State GIS Initiative is moving forward. The Center will leverage additional funding from the Federal Highway Administration with the ILRC grant.
- The grant application for the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment is moving forward. The Center has completed a study of 44 Central Indiana Counties; this grant will complete the Center’s study statewide.
- Joe Tutterrow distributed information from Mr. Richard Krockner regarding a proposed rezoning and development in Vanderburgh County.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joe Tutterrow, Director

Presenters

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